

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8707

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: TPHY, MX

SUBJ: SCIENCE POLICY STATUS REVIEW

REF: STATE 209950 (AIDAC CIRCULAR)

1. EMBASSY HAS REPORTED EXTENSIVELY ON DEVELOPMENT OF NATIONAL SCIENCE POLICY IN MEXICO AND WOULD REFER THOSE PREPARING THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF SCIENCE POLICY EFFORTS IN LATIN AMERICA TO THE FOLLOWING BASIC DOCUMENTS:

A. MEXICO A-236 OF 4/28/72 - CURRENT APPRAISAL OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN MEXICO

B. MEXICO A-216 OF 5/4/73 - CURRENT TRENDS OF GOM IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

C. MEXICO A-239 OF 5/18/73 - CURRENT ASSESSMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN MEXICO: UPDATED

2. CONACYT, NOW FINISHING ITS THIRD YEAR OF EXISTENCE, IS PRESENTLY BEING RESTRUCTURED AND EMBASSY HAS BEEN PROMISED GENERAL BROAD OUTLINE OF THAT NEW STRUCTURE AS SOON AS IT BECOMES FIRM.

3. AS OF THIS MOMENT IT APPEARS THAT THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES WILL BE EMPHASIZED:

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A. GREATER ASSISTANCE TO SMALL AND MEDIUM INDUSTRY.

B. CLOSE TIES WITH THE SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL COMMUNITY.

C. SUPPORT OF DEVELOPMENT PRIORITY PROGRAMS.

4. CONACYT IS THE CHOSEN INSTRUMENT OF THE GOM IN DEVELOPING NATIONAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE IMPACT WHICH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY HAVE ON ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT. INCREASINGLY, IT IS EXERCISING THE AUTHORITY GIVEN TO IT TO REVIEW THE PLANS AND PROGRAMS OF OTHER AGENCIES OF THE GOVERNMENT AND EVEN TO EXERCISE CERTAIN CONTROLS OVER THEM, BY BRINGING INTO PLAY THE COORDINATION POWERS RESIDING IN ITS CHARTER.

5. THE COUNCIL IS ALSO ENDEAVORING TO EXERCISE ITS NATIONAL SCIENCE POLICY PLANNING RESPONSIBILITY BY DEVELOPING PRIORITIES ON A NATIONAL SCALE AND ASSIGNING TO THEM SHORT TERM, MEDIUM TERM AND LONG TERM OBJECTIVES.

6. BUDGETWISE, CONACYT IS ALSO BEING ENDOWED WITH AN INCREASING AMOUNT OF FUNDS EACH YEAR. FOR 1971 IT HAD NO BUDGET OF ITS OWN, BUT A DRAWING ACCOUNT ON PRESIDENTIAL FUNDS. FOR 1972 ITS FIRST BUDGET WAS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF US\$5,000,000. FOR 1973, WE HAVE NO EXACT FIGURES BUT FOR FELLOWSHIPS ALONE THE PRESS HAS REPORTED MORE THAN US\$4.5 MILLION. FIRM FIGURES HAVE BEEN REQUESTED AND WILL BE REPORTED SOONEST.

7. WITHIN THE PAST YEAR, THE GOM HAS ALSO PROMULGATED LAWS WHICH WILL HAVE AN INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY IN THE NATION, NAMELY: A NEW TAX LAW, ANOTHER ON TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND YET A THIRD ON THE REGULATION OF CAPITAL INVESTMENT. A FOURTH, ON PATENTS, IS CURRENTLY IN THE LEGISLATIVE MILL. THE COMPILERS OF THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW WILL WISH TO PAY PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO THIS ASPECT OF THEIR STUDY. (SINCE THE EMBASSY HAS REPORTED EXCLUSIVELY ON THESE LEGISLATIVE DEVELOPMENTS THE REVIEW COMPILERS ARE REFERRED TO ARA/MEX (RICHARD KING) FOR A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW.) A COMPARISON OF SIMILAR LEGISLATION IN OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES COULD BE MOST REWARDING AND PROVIDE INSIGHT INTO FUTURE TRENDS.

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8. FYI. WITH REFERENCE TO POINT 3.A. ABOVE, THERE IS A NEGATIVE ASPECT TO MEXICAN POLICY HERE, IN THAT PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA HAS TAKEN CONACYT TO TASK FOR NOT ASSURING THAT ASSISTANCE 'NOT' GO TO LARGE (READ MULTINATIONAL) CORPORATIONS. SEE MEXICO 2380. END FYI.
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